

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 ACDA-12 IO-13
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 AID-05
OMB-01 TRSE-00 HA-05 HEW-04 PC-01 AF-10 ARA-10
/156 W

-----031860 121450Z /41

P R 121241Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8514
INFO AMEMBASSY IALAMABAD
AMEMBASSY ANKARACGEEIO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 4752

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, PINT, AF, US
SUBJECT: MY FAREWELL CALL ON PREMIER TARAHI

REF: A) KABUL 3619; B) KABUL 4650

1. SUMMARY: WITH ONLY 25 MINUTES ADVANCE WARNING, I MET AGAIN WITH NUR MOHAMMAD TARAHI, AFGHANISTAN'S NEW PREMIER, ON JUNE 11 TO SAY GOODBYE. UNLIKE OUR LAST MEETING A MONTH AGO, IN THE OLD PRIME MINISTRY BUILDING, HE RECEIVED ME THIS TIME IN THE OFFICE BUILDING AND ELEGANT RECEPTION ROOM FORMERLY USED BY KING ZAHER AND THEN PRESIDENT DAOUD.
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TARAHI WAS ALONE; I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DCM AMSTUTZ.

2. LIKE LAST TIME, TARAHI WAS FRIENDLY, DIRECT, AND SELF-ASSURED. WE TALKED ALMOST 75 MINUTES -- MUCH LONGER THAN I EXPECTED -- DISCUSSING MOSTLY ECONOMIC AID, PEACE CORPS, AND THE GOVERNMENT'S SO-CALLED NONALIGNED POLICY. IT WAS AN ENLIGHTENING MEETING,

BUT NOT A REASSURING ONE. I CAME AWAY EVER MORE
CONVINCED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS
WILL NEVER BE CLOSE, AND THAT ROCKY TIMES MAY LIE AHEAD.
END SUMMARY.

3. TARAKI HAD TWO TOPICS TO RAISE WITH ME. THE FIRST
WAS TO ASK ME TO INFORM WASHINGTON, AND PARTICULARLY
"COMRADE CARTER," THAT AFGHANISTAN REMAINS INDEPENDENT
AND WILL NEVER BE A SATELLITE OF ANY COUNTRY. TO
EMPHASIZE HIS POINT, HE REPEATEDLY SAID THAT AFGHAN-
ISTAN WILL NOT "AUCTION" ITSELF TO ANY FOREIGN POWER.
I SAID THAT I WAS VERY PLEASED TO HEAR HIM REITERATE
WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME EARLIER. IT HAD LONG BEEN, I SAID,
A FUNDAMENTAL PILLAR OF OUR POLICY TOWARD HIS COUNTRY
TO SUPPORT ITS INDEPENDENCE.

4. THE NEXT TOPIC HE RAISED WAS ECONOMIC AID. HE SAID
THAT HE WANTED US TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE RUSSIANS
BY PLEDGING PUBLICLY TO AFGHANISTAN A SIZABLE LUMP SUM
FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HOPEFULLY THIS WOULD BE IN
THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$100 - \$300 MILLION. AFTER THIS
NEOIM HAD BEEN PUBLICLY COMMITTED, THE AID TECHNICIANS
OF BOTH COUNTRIES SHOULD SIT DOWN TO DISCUSS HOW THE
MONEY WOULD BE SPENT. THE CAPITAL AID WE HAD GIVEN IN
THE PAST, SUCH AS FOR THE KABUL-KANDAHAR HIGHWAY AND
THE HELMAND VALLEY, WAS MUCH APPRECIATED AND HE HOPED
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WE COULD DO THIS KIND OF THING AGAIN. EXPANDING ON
HIS POINT, HE REPEATEDLY ALLUDED TO THE POVERTY OF HIS
PEOPLE AND THE NEED TO GIVE THEM "FOOD, CLOTHING, AND
SHELTER," BUT HIS APPROACH TO MEETING THESE NEEDS WAS
CLEARLY VIA INFRASTRUCTURE AND HEAVY INDUSTRY PROJECTS.
OUR POOR MAJORITY FOCUS, WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON AGRICUL-
TURE, EDUCATION AND HEALTH DID NOT EXCITE HIM. HE
BLUNTLY SAID THAT HEALTH PROJECTS WERE NOT OF THE
HIGHEST PRIORITY.

5. I RESPONDED BY TAKING TWO TACKS. I SAID THAT I WANTED
TO BE FRANK. I HAD JUST COMPLETED MY ROUND OF CALLS ON
ALL OF HIS DEVELOPMENT MINISTERS. FEW OF THE MINISTERS
HAD EXHIBITED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF OUR EXISTING OR PREVIOUSLY
PLANNED AID PROJECTS AND, WITH ONE OR TWO EXCEPTIONS,
ALL HAD ALSO DISPLAYED LITTLE INTEREST IN U.S. AID.
I SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED MY UNSATISFACTORY MEETINGS WITH
THE PLANNING, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND AGRICULTURE MINISTERS.
I HAD HOPED FROM THOSE MEETINGS TO LEARN OF HIS GOVERN-
MENT'S WISHES WITH RESPECT TO OUR AID PROGRAM, BUT WITH
THE EXCEPTION OF A REQUEST TO CONTINUE IN THE HELMAND,
WE HAD RECEIVED LITTLE INDICATION OF WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS.

6. THE OTHER POINT I MADE WAS THAT, IN CONTRAST TO THE
RUSSIAN SYSTEM OF MAKING A LINE OF CREDIT AVAILABLE,
WE DID NOT MAKE
ADVANCE AID COMMITMENTS BEFORE PROJECTS
WERE FORMULATED. OUR SYSTEM WAS RATHER TO DESIGN, WITH
THE HELP OF THE HOST GOVERNMENT, SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND
THEN TO SEEK WASHINGTON FINANCING. THIS SYSTEM HAD
EVOLVED BECAUSE OUR DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY REQUIRED THAT
AID FUNDS BE APPROPRIATED ANNUALLY, AND THAT EVERY AID
PROJECT HAD TO BE JUSTIFIED TO AND APPROVED BY THE
CONGRESS. IN TERMS OF AID MAGNITUDES, EXPERIENCE HAD
SHOWN THAT RECIPIENT COUNTRIES DID NOT GET ANY LESS AID
UNDER OUR SYSTEM THAN BY MULTI-YEAR ADVANCE PLEDGING.
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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00
ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08
AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 HA-05 HEW-04 PC-01 /156 W
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P R 121241Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8515
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DACCA
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USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 4752

CORRECTED COPY (TEXT)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. TARAKI'S RESPONSE TO MY EXPLANATIONS WAS MERELY TO REITERATE HIS REQUEST THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF PLEDGING A GIVEN AMOUNT OF AID TO AFGHANISTAN WHICH, HE SAID, HIS GOVERNMENT COULD CITE PUBLICLY TO THE PEOPLE. HE EXPLAINED AWAY THE IGNORANCE AND/OR INDIFFERENCE OF HIS FELLOW CABINET MINISTERS AS PRINCIPALLY DUE TO INEXPERIENCE. ON THIS NOTE, AND ON TARAKI'S GRUDGING ADMISSION THAT HE RESPECTED OUR CONGRESS' LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, WE LEFT IT THAT MY AID DIRECTOR WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH HIS MINISTERS.

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8. I DO NOT KNOW WHERE THIS WILL ALL COME OUT. IF TARAKI SO CHOOSES, HE COULD USE OUR INABILITY (AND I ASSUME UNWILLINGNESS) TO PLEDGE A LARGE LUMP SUM TO AFGHANISTAN AS AN EXCUSE FOR FLAILING US AS AN UNFRIENDLY COUNTRY AND ACCORDINGLY TO JUSTIFY HIS HEAVY DEPENDENCE ON THE SOVIET UNION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF HE GENUINELY WISHES TO MAXIMIZE U.S. AID FLOWS, HE WILL URGE HIS MINISTERS TO WORK WITHIN OUR AID SYSTEM AND DEVELOP WITH US WORTHWHILE PROJECTS.

9. DURING OUR DISCUSSION ON AID, I MENTIONED THE AVAILABILITY OF PEACE CORPS HELP. TARAKI'S RESPONSE WAS UNENTHUSIASTIC -- IF NOT NEGATIVE. HE DESCRIBED PCV'S AS "BEAUTIFUL GIRLS AND BOYS" WHO ENJOYED MEETING OTHER "BEAUTIFUL GIRLS AND BOYS" BUT THEY LACKED SKILLS. I TRIED TO DISABUSE HIM OF THIS IMPRESSION AND, WHILE IN THE END HE DID NOT RULE OUT SOME PCV HELP, HIS ATTITUDE HARDLY SUGGESTED A LARGE OR LIVELY FUTURE ROLE FOR PEACE CORPS IN AFGHANISTAN.

10. I THEN TOOK UP WITH HIM THE SUBJECT OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S CLAIM NONALIGNED STANCE. I SAID THAT, AS HE WAS AWARE, WE HAD A FREE PRESS IN THE UNITED STATES AND THAT OUR PEOPLE JUDGED OTHER GOVERNMENTS BY THE ACTIONS THEY TOOK. IN THIS CONNECTION, I SAID THE INTERNATIONAL POSITIONS HIS GOVERNMENT HAD SO FAR EXPRESSED IN HAVANA AND NEW YORK, AND IN THE KABUL PRESS, RANGING FROM AFRICAN TO DISARMAMENT SUBJECTS, SUGGESTED THAT AFGHAN FOREIGN POLICY WAS NO DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE SOVIET UNION. IF THIS IDENTITY OF POLICIES PERSISTED, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD INEVITABLY RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN'S INDEPENDENCE AND NONALIGNMENT.

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11. AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, TARAKI REACTED SHARPLY. HE SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS WERE ALWAYS INDEPENDENTLY ARRIVED AT. IF IT SO HAPPENED THESE WERE NO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE U.S. SHOULD NOT JUMP TO THE CONCLUSION THAT AFGHANISTAN WAS THEREBY NOT INDEPENDENT OR LACKED A MIND OF ITS OWN. SHOWING SOME EMOTION, HE SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO EXPRESS ITS SUPPORT FOR ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, ETHIOPIA, AND THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF ZAIRE. WE THEN DISCUSSED RUSSIAN INTERVENTION IN SOMALIA, ETHIOPIA, AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT TARAKI ACCEPTED -- IF NOT APPROVED -- ALL SUCH SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENTS.

HE SAID THAT IN THE PAST, NONALIGNMENT MEANT THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT KEPT SILENT ON INTERNATIONAL

ISSUES. IN THE FUTURE, AFGHANISTAN WOULD NOT BE SILENT. HE MADE NO COMMENT IN RESPONSE TO MY URGING THAT HIS GOVERNMENT CONSIDER ALL SIDES TO EACH ISSUE.

12. COMMENT: ON THIS UNSATISFACTORY AND UNCERTAIN NOTE, OUR MEETING ENDED. WE PARTED WITH MUTUAL EXCHANGES OF FRIENDSHIP AND GOOD WISHES, BUT THE FUTURE SHAPE OF OUR RELATIONS REMAINS MURKY. WHILE WE HAVE PUT TARAKI ON NOTICE THAT WE ARE TAKING CAREFUL NOTE OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS, I VERY MUCH DOUBT THAT WE WILL FIND AFGHANISTAN AMONG THE "MODERATES" IN THE NONALIGNED MOVEMENT. TARAKI'S DEMAND, TOO, FOR A SPECIFIC AMERICAN LUMP-SUM PLEDGE OF AID DOES NOT AUGER WELL FOR AN EASY AID RELATIONSHIP.

13. TIME DID NOT PERMIT ME TO DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS OR AFGHAN/PAK RELATIONS WHICH I AM TAKING UP IN MY FAREWELL CALL ON DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN
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MINISTER AMIN.
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Message Attributes

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